

UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL <small>(for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))</small>		Attorney Docket No. <u>1999-0804</u>	Total Pages																
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Herman Chien																			
APPLICATION ELEMENTS <small>See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.</small>		ADDRESS TO:	Assistant Commissioner for Patents Box Patent Application Washington, D.C. 20231																
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1. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayments to: Deposit Account Number 01-2745 Deposit Account Name AT&T CORP. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charge Any Additional Fee Required Under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17 <input type="checkbox"/> Charge the Issue Fee Set in 37 CFR 1.18 at the Mailing Date of the Notice of Allowance			3. ADDITIONAL FEES <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Large Fee Code</th> <th>Entity Fee(\$)</th> <th>Fee Description</th> <th>Fee Paid</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>105</td><td>130</td><td>Surcharge - late filing fee or oath</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>127</td><td>50</td><td>Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>139</td><td>130</td><td>Non-English specification</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>147</td><td>2520</td><td>For filing a request for reexamination</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>112*</td><td>920</td><td>Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>113*</td><td>1840</td><td>Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>115</td><td>110</td><td>Extension for reply within first month</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>116</td><td>380</td><td>Extension for reply within second month</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>117</td><td>870</td><td>Extension for reply within third month</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>118</td><td>1360</td><td>Extension for reply within fourth month</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>128</td><td>1850</td><td>Extension for reply within fifth month</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>119</td><td>300</td><td>Notice of Appeal</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>120</td><td>300</td><td>Filing a brief in support of an appeal</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>121</td><td>260</td><td>Request for oral hearing</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>138</td><td>1510</td><td>Petition to institute a public use proceeding</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>140</td><td>110</td><td>Petition to revive – unavoidable</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>141</td><td>1210</td><td>Petition to revive – unintentional</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>142</td><td>1210</td><td>Utility issue fee (or reissue)</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>143</td><td>430</td><td>Design issue fee</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>122</td><td>130</td><td>Petitions to the Commissioner</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>123</td><td>50</td><td>Petitions related to provisional applications</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>126</td><td>240</td><td>Submission of Information Disclosure Statement</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>581</td><td>40</td><td>Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>146</td><td>690</td><td>Filing a submission after final rejection(37 CFR 1.129(a))</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>149</td><td>690</td><td>For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR 1.129(b))</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td colspan="4">Other fee (specify)</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td colspan="4">Other fee (specify)</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">SUBTOTAL (1) 690</td> <td colspan="2">* Reduced by Basic Filing Fee Paid</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">SUBTOTAL (2) 0</td> <td colspan="2">SUBTOTAL(3) 40</td> </tr> </tbody></table>		Large Fee Code	Entity Fee(\$)	Fee Description	Fee Paid	105	130	Surcharge - late filing fee or oath		127	50	Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet		139	130	Non-English specification		147	2520	For filing a request for reexamination		112*	920	Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action		113*	1840	Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action		115	110	Extension for reply within first month		116	380	Extension for reply within second month		117	870	Extension for reply within third month		118	1360	Extension for reply within fourth month		128	1850	Extension for reply within fifth month		119	300	Notice of Appeal		120	300	Filing a brief in support of an appeal		121	260	Request for oral hearing		138	1510	Petition to institute a public use proceeding		140	110	Petition to revive – unavoidable		141	1210	Petition to revive – unintentional		142	1210	Utility issue fee (or reissue)		143	430	Design issue fee		122	130	Petitions to the Commissioner		123	50	Petitions related to provisional applications		126	240	Submission of Information Disclosure Statement		581	40	Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)	40	146	690	Filing a submission after final rejection(37 CFR 1.129(a))		149	690	For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR 1.129(b))		Other fee (specify)					Other fee (specify)					SUBTOTAL (1) 690			* Reduced by Basic Filing Fee Paid		SUBTOTAL (2) 0			SUBTOTAL(3) 40	
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**APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES
LETTERS PATENT**

**Subscription-Based Billing Methods and Systems for
Shared Network Modem Pools**

Inventors:

CHIEN, Herman

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Related Applications

This application claims priority under 35 U. S. C. § 119 from provisional United States Patent Application Serial Number 60/173,416 filed December 28, 1999.

Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to methods and systems for utilizing modem pools through a network. More specifically, the invention relates to methods and systems for billing when a call is made on a particular modem that is a member of a modem pool.

Description of the related art

Most office environments utilize computer networks for various tasks, which require “dial-out” capabilities to, e.g., the Internet and to other types of networks, like wide area networks (WANs), local area networks (LANs), Intranets and others. A modem is typically used to make the telecommunications link between the user of the network and another network or user to whom the current user desires to link. As the Internet has grown, and as the number of users of office computer networks proliferates, managing the outgoing calls over office computer networks becomes an increasingly difficult task.

Typical office computer networks employ a shared “modem pool” which is essentially a bank of modems. In such an arrangement, no single computer in the network is assigned a single modem with which to make dial-out connections, but rather any computer in the network may dial-out with any free modem in the pool depending on a particular queuing algorithm which routes connections from computers in the network

to the next available modem. While some modems may be "smart" modems in that they have the ability to communicate with the individual computer requesting the dial-out connection and to track the calls so made, most networks do not employ to any large degree such smart modems since they are expensive. Thus, when it is desired to track a
5 call made by a computer in the network for purposes such as billing the call, the network is simply unable to do so with the network-based modem pool. In point of fact, most computer networks are setup today so that only a single account, typically that belonging to the modem pool owner, gets billed for all of the calls made from the shared modem pool.

10 This is mainly a consequence of the limitations of current local exchange carriers (LEC) and the existing telephony networks. Various local and long distance providers today engage in an elaborate signaling and billing system whereby local tariff and long distance calls are switched among multiple carriers in order to complete the call. These entities then separate the total cost of the call among each other and distribute the money
15 for each call according to a model based on how many resources have been used by each carrier in completing the call. The bills for each call are sent to the responsible caller's service provider for inclusion on the caller's monthly bill. When a modem pool is involved, this results in the modem pool's owner being held financially responsible for this bill.

20 This type of billing arrangement with a shared modem pool is problematic for most computer networks especially since the owner of the network-based modem pool is, in reality, not responsible for the end users' calls. This arrangement is best illustrated in a Fixed Wireless System where end users access network-based modem pools over

wireless data channels. In this case, it is very difficult to track and bill each of the end users for their access to the modem pool. Moreover, a way to track incurred long-distance and other toll charges made by a modem pool does not exist today. It will be appreciated that this creates a significant economic impact on the Fixed Wireless System owner since it cannot bill the users for such access to the network. Even smart modems, which contain user authentication features therein, are not adequate for sophisticated and complete billing procedures in networks using modem pools. Such smart modems typically provide an accounting of calling events and do not further process calling event information. Thus, smart modems in a modem pool cannot provide true billing services.

10 There thus exists a long-felt need for methods and systems for allowing end users of a computer network to be billed directly for their use of a network-based or shared modem pool. It is desirable that such systems and methods be economical to implement and versatile for use with a variety of computer networks. Moreover, the systems and methods should be easily retrofittable with existing networks, and easily integratable with
15 new networks. Such systems and methods should also not interfere with the speed of the modems in the shared pool, or with the operations of the computers and processors accessing the network. Additionally, the systems and methods should allow for simple billing of the dial-out connections from individual computers or users in a straightforward billing format. These needs have not heretofore been achieved in the art.

20 **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

The aforementioned problems are solved, and long-felt needs met, by methods of billing a telephone call in a network that utilizes a modem pool. Preferably, a request is received from a user of the network to place a telephone call through the modem pool.

Along with the request, user identifying information is received to authenticate the request as coming from a valid user of the network. It is then preferred to correlate the user identifying information with billing information associated with the user, and to bill the user for the telephone call if the user identifying information has been correlated with
5 the billing information.

In a further preferred aspect of the invention, methods of processing a request to place a telephone call through a network that utilizes a modem pool are provided. In a preferred embodiment, user identifying information associated with a user that has placed a telephone call through the network is received, and a database is searched that contains
10 information related to users of the network to correlate the user identifying information with the user and to authenticate the user as a valid user of the network. It is then preferable to pass the telephone call through the network if the user identifying information has been correlated to the user and the user has been authenticated as a valid user of the network. The responsible caller's telephone number is then passed to a local
15 exchange carrier by a communications protocol and the long-distance or other telephone charges generated by the call are sent back by the local exchange carrier for aggregation and ultimate billing to the user making the call so that the owner of the modem pool is not left responsible for the toll and/or other long-distance charges.

Thus, the inventive methods provide an efficient and accurate way in which to bill
20 for telephone calls in a network that utilizes a shared modem pool. Without such methods, these telephone calls will go unbilled, thereby greatly reducing the revenue flow for telephone calls to the owners and/or operators of the network. Moreover, the inventive methods are easily integratable into current networks that are controlled and

operated by computer, as they may be easily implementable in software. These results have not heretofore been achieved in the art.

These and other features and benefits of the invention will be recognized by those with skill in the art by reading the following detailed description of the invention in conjunction with the drawings that are first described briefly below. However, the invention is not limited by this description and the drawings, but only by the claims that are appended hereto.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements throughout the several views thereof:

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a network that utilizes the inventive methods of billing through a shared modem pool; and

Figure 2 depicts a flow chart of a preferred embodiment of the inventive methods.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to Figure 1, a system that utilizes a shared modem pool is depicted wherein the inventive methods of billing for telephone calls are implemented. A user 10 of the system attempts to place a telephone call through the system through an access network 15 that provides users with a connection to the outside world. The access network 15 is any network that is operable to provide service to the user, for example, a fixed wireless network, a LAN or WAN, an Intranet, or the Internet. The user 10 may be situated in an office or home environment to which modem pool 20 is provided. The user 10 may utilize a personal or laptop computer, a landline telephone, a wireless or cellular

telephone, a personal digital assistant, a facsimile machine, a set-top box, or any other device that communicates through the network 15. Any device that is operable to place telephone calls may be used to place the call.

Typically, the user is interfaced through network 15 to the shared modem pool 20 which comprises a plurality of modems 30 that allow multiple users to make telephone calls simultaneously through network 15, and a control module 40 which preferably provides functionality to control and process calls. The modem pool 20 is further operable to pass telephone calls to the outside world, to other users, or to any other person or device which user 10 desires to contact. Generally, the user 10 will place a telephone call that is first received by control module 40 which picks an open modem 30 currently not in use through which the call will be passed. While the inventive methods are particularly useful for establishing billing for a modem pool with more than one modem, it will be appreciated that these methods are equally applicable for performing billing when only one modem is available to the network, but more than one user has access to the single modem. The term "modem pool" should be construed throughout to include this single modem arrangement.

The access network 15 and shared modem pool 20 are provided by the service provider and are connected to a public telephony network 85 which, in the past, has traced the telephone calls made by users 10 for billing purposes only as far back as 20 modem pool 20. Acting as a typical "local exchange carrier" (LEC), the public telephony network 85 accumulates long-distance and local charges, which, absent the implementation of the inventive methods, become the responsibility of the service provider to pay. The present invention removes this set of problems for the service

provider by signaling to the LEC that the party responsible for the costs associated with the users' telephone calls are the users themselves, not the service provider.

This has not been possible in the past since the user 10 is only known to modem pool 20 by identifying attributes, e.g., an IP address, a username, or the destination phone number. This is not enough information to bill the user 10 specifically for the telephone call, but will usually allow the user to be authenticated as a valid user of the network.

Authentication involves verifying the above-referred to attributes with an authentication database that preferably checks these attributes against subscribed to attributes for the user 10 that are stored in the authentication database, as well as attributes that are associated with the called number. For example, a particular user may be allowed to make local calls only and would therefore be denied access to the public telephony network 85 if a long-distance call is attempted. This is an example of an attribute that could be authenticated with the inventive methods.

The inventive methods are implemented by a server 50 which is essentially a computer that performs all of the maintenance, operational and other functions associated with the access network 15 and the services made operable thereby. In a preferred embodiment, the access network 15 is a Fixed Wireless Network. Moreover, server 50 may be a commercially available server which runs a UNIX environment, WINDOWS environment or any other appropriate operating system. For example, the Compaq Computer Corp. (Houston, Texas) PROLIANT server is an appropriate server, or servers available from Sun Microsystems may also be utilized.

In accordance with the invention, server 50 is provided with a software platform to perform the billing processes and associated functions of the invention to be described

below. The software may be programmed in any language such as C++, JAVA, VISUALBASIC, HTML, or others. It will be recognized that the software may also be programmed in modules with specific functionality that will be controlled by server 50. Moreover, the software may be hard-coded or burned into a microchip, stored on a hard-drive associated with server 50, or placed in a separate memory that is remote from server 50 but which can be accessed therefrom. All such embodiments and equivalents thereof are within the scope of the present invention.

In accordance with the invention, a higher level of intelligence is placed in the authentication data base and modem pool than has previously existed. The high-level intelligence allows the inventive methods to provide not only a "go, no-go" decision to allow the call to be passed as result of authentication, but to provide the user's billing number and other relevant information to the public telephony network 85 for billing to the user directly without involving the service provider in billing the user.

Preferably, the modem pool 20 utilizes a communications protocol to forward the billing and other important information to the public telephony network or LEC 85. For example, the Primary Rate Interface (PRI) protocol currently in use today may be employed to forward the billing information to the LEC. Any protocol that is rich in information fields can be used to forward the billing information to the LEC.

Today the role of PRI is to link the modem to the LEC. The present invention expands the use of PRI and allows PRI to pass the responsible caller's telephone number during the call to the telephony network such that all the normal billing and rating processes normally occur and so that the charges for toll and other calls get sent to the responsible caller's service provider for inclusion on the caller's bill.

A request to make a telephone call is input to the system along with user identifying data that accompanies the request and that identifies the particular user that is making the request and the telephone call. After the request to pass a telephone call is received by server 50, a search module 60 initiates a search of the authentication database 5 70 that preferably contains authenticating data concerning all of the users that may make telephone calls. Depending on the level of sophistication of the device that is employed by the user to make the telephone call, the originating phone number may or may not be apparent to the modem pool. For example, a Plain Old Telephone System (POTS) handset will not convey any information to the modem pool about the origination phone 10 number, but a computer could convey this and more. Therefore, the data base search and look-up task may vary in sophistication which will be generally inversely proportional to the sophistication of the user's device. The invention is intended to cover all such levels of sophistication in both the user's device and the data base search and look-up schemes. The user identifying information may comprise any relevant data about the user that is 15 necessary to allow the user to be billed for the telephone calls. For example, the user's home and/or business address, name, IP address, social security number, network account number, computer or other device serial number, and other important information may be stored in database 70 to allow the search module 60 to accurately, quickly and efficiently look-up and authenticate the users therein. The user identifying information may be 20 added, deleted, or changed when necessary.

Once the search module 60 has accessed the authentication database 70, a correlation module 80 compares the user identifying information that is received with the entries in the database 70 to determine whether the user requesting to make the telephone

call is authorized to do so, and whether that user can indeed be billed for such a call.

Once it is determined by correlation module 80 that the user is authorized and can be

billed, the call may be passed to its appropriate destination. A billing module 90 then

prepares billing information for the telephone call. Billing may be accomplished in a

5 conventional manner with known software. A billing aggregator module 95 then

aggregates the billing information for all calls made through the modem pool by

collecting authenticated information about the user from the billing module 90 and

receiving toll and/or other long-distance charge information from the LEC so that these

charges can be billed to the user.

10 The billing aggregator 95 thus preferably accepts data from two paths. The first

path is from the public telephony network 85 to the billing aggregator 95 wherein the

user's 10 telephone number and billing charges for the call made by user 10 can be

collected. A second path involves receipt by the billing aggregator 95 of authenticated

user identifying information which allows the modem pool owners to charge for

15 individual accesses to the network by the users or for other revenue generating events that

the network can track using the per-call authentication scheme described above. These

two paths allow for complete billing of all charges to the user and removes financial

responsibility from the modem pool owners for these charges.

As mentioned above, the inventive methods may be programmed in software and

20 implemented on a computer. Referring to Figure 2, a flow chart is depicted of a preferred

method that may be programmed in software for billing a user for a telephone call made

through a network utilizing a shared modem pool. The method starts at step 100 and at

step 110 a request is received to make a telephone call at the modem pool of the network.

At step 120, the user identifying information is also received, and at step 130 the authentication database of allowed users is accessed. The database contains records of user identifying data for all allowed users of the network.

At step 140 the user identifying data is then correlated with the data in the
5 authentication database. Correlation involves at step 150 determining whether the user is a valid user of the network. If not, then at step 160 the user is not permitted to make the telephone call (or alternatively the call is allowed but the user is not billed for the call) and the method stops at step 170. If so, then at step 180 the call is permitted to pass the modem pool. At step 190, long-distance and/or other toll charges for the telephone are
10 received from the LEC, and this information as well as authenticated user identifying information which may carry additional charges is aggregated at step 200. At step 210, the billing for the telephone call is then made to each of the users making telephone calls through the modem pool so that the service provider, i.e., the owner of the modem pool, is not left financially responsible for the calls made by the users.

15 Thus, the inventive methods provide an efficient and accurate way in which to bill for telephone calls in a network that utilizes a shared modem pool. Without such methods, these telephone calls will go unbilled or would be billed to the service providers. Moreover, the inventive methods are easily integratable into current networks that are controlled and operated by a computer, as they may be easily implementable in
20 software. These results have not heretofore been achieved in the art.

While there have been shown and described and pointed out certain novel features of the present invention as applied to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various omissions and substitutions and

changes in the methods and apparatus described herein, and in their operation, may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. It is expressly intended that all combinations of those elements and/or method steps which perform substantially the same function in substantially the same way to achieve the same results are within the scope of the invention. Substitutions of method steps and elements from one described embodiment to another are also fully intended and contemplated. It is the intention, therefore, to be limited only as indicated by the scope of the claims appended hereto.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of billing a telephone call made through a network that utilizes
2 a modem, comprising the steps of:

3 receiving a request from a user of the network to place a telephone call
4 through the modem;

5 receiving user identifying information to authenticate the request as
6 coming from a valid user of the network;

7 correlating the user identifying information with billing information
8 associated with the user; and

9 forwarding call charge information from a public telephony network so
10 that the user is billed for the call.

11 2. The method recited in claim 1, wherein the correlating step comprises the
12 step of searching a database comprising records of user identifying data for all valid users
13 of the network.

1 3. The method recited in claim 2, wherein the searching step comprises the
2 step of comparing the user identifying information received to the billing information
3 associated with the user, and authenticating the user when the user's user identifying data
4 matches the billing information.

1 4. The method recited in claim 3, further comprising the step of passing the
2 telephone call through the network if the user identifying information received is
3 authenticated.

1 5. The method recited in claim 4 wherein the network comprises a wireless
2 network.

1 6. A method of processing a request to place a telephone call through a
2 network that utilizes a modem pool, comprising the steps of:
3 receiving user identifying information associated with a user that has
4 placed a telephone call through the network;

5 searching a database containing information related to users of the
6 network to correlate the user identifying information with the user and authenticate the
7 user as a valid user of the network;

8 forwarding call charge information from a public telephony network so
9 that the user is billed for the call; and

10 passing the telephone call through the network if the user identifying
11 information has been correlated to the user and the user has been authenticated as a valid
12 user of the network.

1 7. The method recited in claim 6, wherein the searching step further
2 comprises the step of comparing the user identifying information with records of billing
3 information stored in the database.

1 8. The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the step of billing the
2 user for the telephone call when the user has been authenticated as a valid user of the
3 network.

1 9. The method recited in claim 8, wherein the network comprises a wireless
2 network.

1 10. A network that utilizes a modem for processing calls made through the
2 network, comprising:

3 a server for receiving user identifying information associated with a user
4 that has placed a telephone call through the network;
5 a search module for searching a database containing information related to
6 users of the network and for correlating the user identifying information with the user to
7 authenticate the user as a valid user of the network such that when the user has been
8 authenticated as a valid user of the network, the telephone call is passed through the
9 network; and

10 a billing aggregator module, which aggregates charge call information
11 received from a public telephony network and the user identifying information so that the
12 user is billed for the call.

1 11. The network recited in claim 10, further comprising a correlating module
2 for comparing the user identifying information with records of user billing information
3 stored in the database.

1 12. The network recited in claim 11, further comprising a billing module in
2 communication with the correlating module for billing the user for the telephone call
3 when the user has been authenticated as a valid user of the network.

1 13. The method recited in claim 12, wherein the network comprises a wireless
2 network.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Methods of billing telephone calls in networks that utilize shared modem pools.

- A request from a user of the network is received along with user identifying data. The user identifying data is correlated with records in a database of user identifying data and
- 5 if a match is found, the call is passed through the network. The user has then been authenticated as a valid user of the network and can be billed accordingly, even though a random modem in the modem pool was used to place the call. This allows the user to be billed for the call so that the owner of the modem pool is not left financially responsible for the long-distance and/or other toll charges incurred by the user in making the call.
- 10 The methods also ensure that the modem pool owners can bill for all calls, thereby enhancing the network's revenue stream.

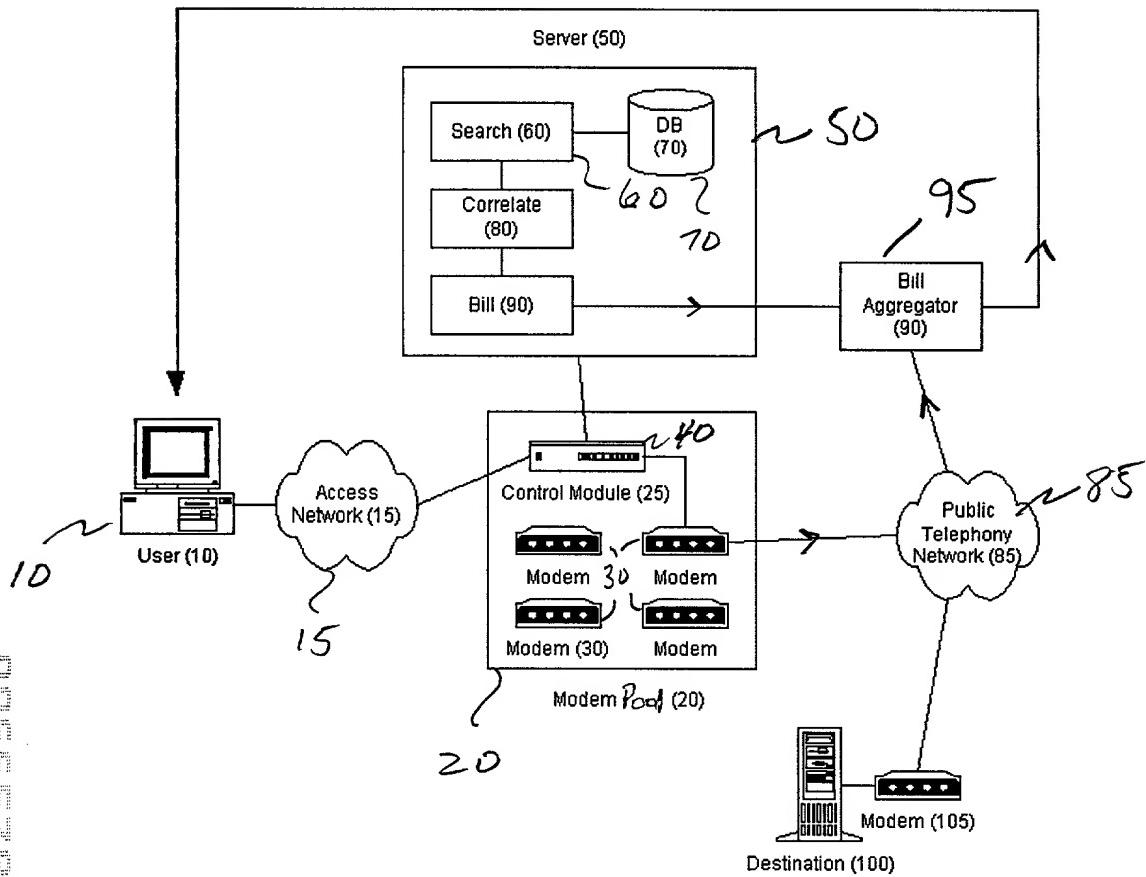
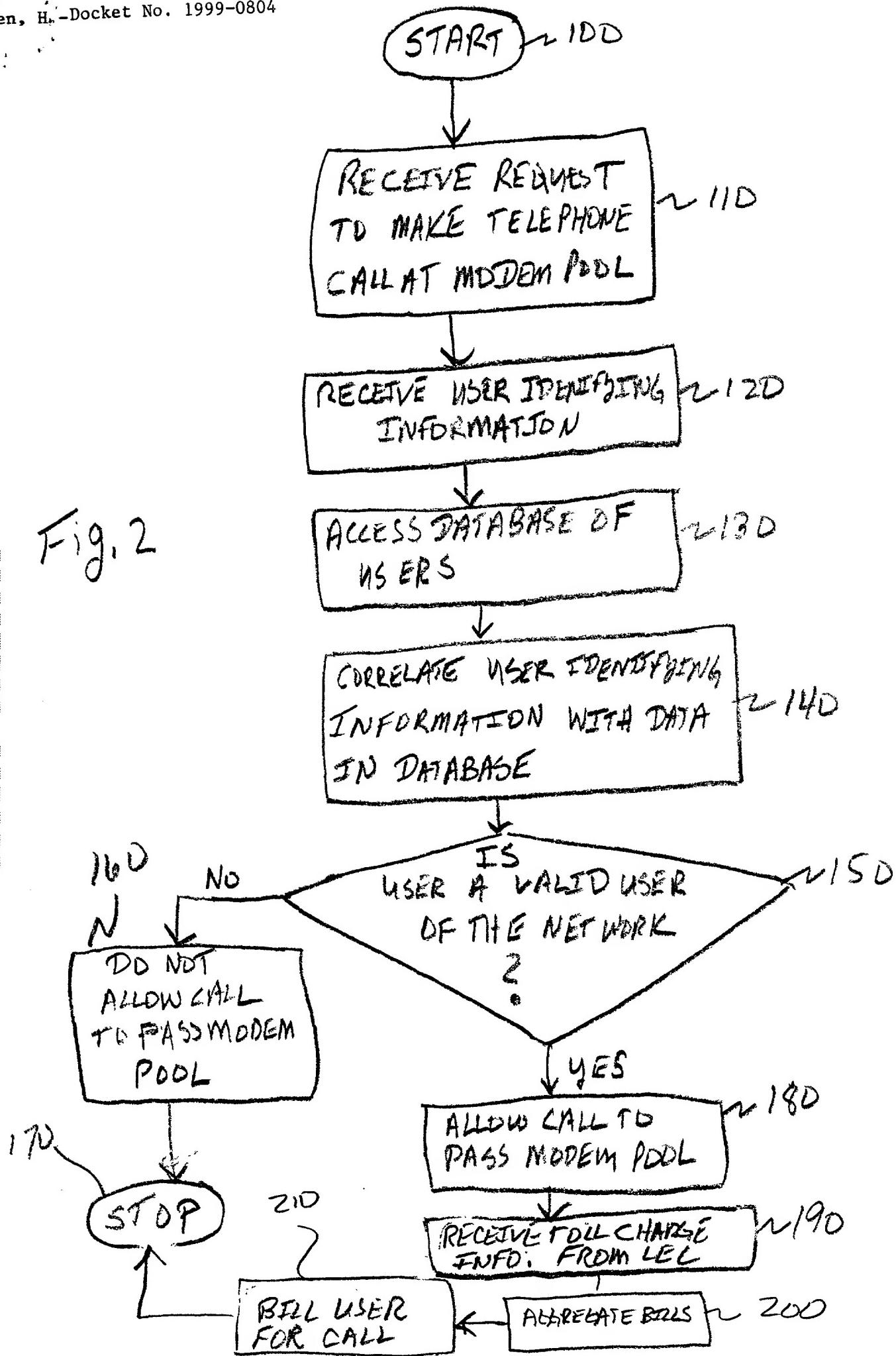


Fig. 1

Fig. 2



**DECLARATION FOR
UTILITY OR DESIGN
PATENT APPLICATION**

Declaration Submitted **OR** Declaration submitted after Initial Filing

Attorney Docket Number	1999-0804
First Named Inventor	Herman Chien
COMPLETE IF KNOWN	
Application Number	
Filing Date	
Group Art Unit	
Examiner Name	

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor(if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

Subscription-Based Billing Methods and Systems for Shared Network Modem Pools

(Title of Invention)

the specification of which

is attached hereto

OR

was filed on _____ as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37 Code of Federal Regulations,§ 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code § 119 (a)-(d) or § 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or § 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or of any PCT international application having a filing date before that of an application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Number(s)	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached? YES	Certified Copy Attached? NO
			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) below.

Application Number(s)	Filing Date(MM/DD/YYYY)	
60/173416	12/28/1999	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto

SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Box Patent Application, Washington, D.C. 20231

Attorney Docket Number: 1999-0804

DECLARATION - Utility or Design Patent Application

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application.

U.S. Parent Application or PCT Parent Number	Parent Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Parent Patent Number (if applicable)

Additional U.S. or PCT International application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following registered practitioner(s) with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application, to make alterations and amendments therein, to receive the patent, and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

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Registered practitioner(s) name/registration number listed below

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LEVY, Robert B.	28234	MCGAHAN, Susan E.	35948
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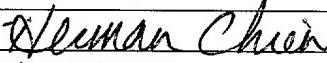
I also appoint the following additional registered practitioner(s) named on the Registered Practitioner Information (Supplemental Sheet) (PTO/SB/02C modified by AT&T Corp.) attached hereto with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application, to make alterations and amendments therein, to receive the patent, and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

Direct all Correspondence to:

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COUNTRY	United States of America			

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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